

## Iraq rejects Kuwaiti call for apology

DOHA (AFP) — Iraqi Foreign Minister Mobammad Said Al Sahhaf on Wednesday turned down calls for an apology over his country's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, saying any reconciliation with Gulf states had to be unconditional. "He who wants to reconcile does not impose conditions," Mr. Sahhaf told a press conference in the Qatari capital, referring to Kuwaiti and Saudi calls for an apology from Baghdad. Mr. Sahhaf, who took part in an Islamic ministerial conference which ended Tuesday, said Iraq wanted to make use of its "popular Arab support" during the crisis over U.N. arms inspections "to restore Arab unity." It also wants to "settle problems left over" from the 1991 Gulf war when Iraqi forces were evicted from Kuwait, he said.

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## Regent, Annan focus talks on human dimension of peace, visit refugee camps

Annan voices support for Regent's call to establish Mideast conflict resolution centre

By Francesca Ciriaci  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan discussed Wednesday the stalled Arab-Israeli peace process and stressed that human conditions are the pillar of peace making.

"We share the same concern about the human conditions, as they relate to the future of peacemaking in this region," Crown Prince Hassan said.

Mr. Annan supported the setting up of a regional centre for conflict resolution and peaceful resolution of controversies in the Middle East, a project long advocated by Prince Hassan.

"I support the idea to bring people together to discuss issues of common concern and look beyond national borders and look at the region," Mr. Annan said.

Refugee issues were central to the talks between the two leaders, who made an unscheduled morning visit to Al Hussein refugee camp which houses Palestinian refugees from the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict, and Al Hatina refugee camp, near Zarqa, home to Palestinians who were forced to flee their homes in the 1967 war.

In the camps, blanketed by the sudden snowfall that hit Jordan yesterday, the Regent and Mr. Annan spoke to the people in the

streets, visited schools, clinics and homes.

Jordan Television showed a very affable Prince Hassan introducing the secretary general to camp residents, both surprised and ecstatic at the unexpected visit.

Prince Hassan said it was important "particularly in this wet weather to visit people without any prior planning," as his discussions with Mr. Annan were focused on "the humanitarian dimension of peace making, a leading principle to peacemaking."

"These people demand their right to return, which the Jordanian government fully supports. At the same time, we want to be able to maintain living conditions and to ensure their full participation in society and life. The focus is about human beings and I am delighted to have the secretary general with us here to see for himself and to interact with people at all levels."

Jordan is home to more than 1.35 million refugees registered with the U.N. Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). The agency counted another 800,000 Palestinians as either displaced persons from, or following, the 1967 war, and returnees who were forced to flee Gulf countries because of the 1990 crisis.

U.N. Resolution 194 upholds their right to return and/or compensation, but Israel insists such right be



Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Hassan and Princess Sarvath and United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, and Nane Annan, his spouse, are welcomed by a Palestinian family's home during their tour at the Hitteen refugee camp on Wednesday. (Photo by Yusuf 'Allan)

recognised only to those who were physically present in war areas in 1948 and 1967.

Accompanied by HRH Princess Sarvath and Nane Annan, the secretary general's spouse, as well as Peter Hansen, head of UNRWA and Ibrahim Badran, director of the Department for Palestinian Affairs, the Regent and Mr. Annan listened to the people's grievances, enquired about their every-day life and drank tea in a camp home.

"I came to see for myself

and to know how to do more," Mr. Annan told reporters, expressing appreciation for His Majesty King Hussein's continuous efforts to assist refugees and struggle for their rights and "applauding the Jordanian government and the Jordanian people for the work [they] are doing."

"I like what I have seen: you have done a lot in very difficult circumstances and I express my admiration and support," he added. Jordan and UNRWA are

under a great financial pressure to assist the refugees.

UNRWA has been several times on the verge of suspending its relief projects in education and health due to a chronic deficit.

Mr. Annan pledged he will "continue to work with Mr. Hansen and other colleagues to raise the necessary funds to provide the necessary support."

Addressing a press conference later in the day, he

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## King urges U.S. to adopt balanced policy in Mideast

WASHINGTON (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein last night called on the United States to adopt a fair and balanced position towards all parties in the Middle East peace process, saying that such a position will contribute to establishing a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the region.

During a meeting with the Chairman of the Senate's External Affairs Committee, Jesse Hill, and committee members, King Hussein stressed the need for intensifying efforts to get the peace process back on track. He outlined the important role the U.S. can play in this respect.

King Hussein discussed with Sen. Hill and the committee members bilateral relations and scope of cooperation in the political, economic and military fields.

Mr. Hill said his country

understands Jordan's development and military needs, and is keen on meeting them to enable Jordan to boost its economy and play its full role in enhancing regional peace and stability.

King Hussein also discussed with Sen. Hill and his committee the agreement signed last month between Iraq and the United Nations. The two sides stressed the importance of full compliance with the agreement in preparation for lifting the sanctions imposed on Iraq since 1990.

Also on Tuesday night, King Hussein met with Heads of the Foreign Aid Committees at the U.S. Senate and Congress and discussed bilateral relations with them. The committee's heads stressed the need to continue providing financial aid to Jordan to enable it to pursue its overall development efforts.

The King was expected to meet with U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and senior State Department officials later Wednesday.

Talks would focus on the Mideast peace process and means of overcoming the current impasse, according to Jordan Television reporter Kassab Samawi.

The meetings were attended by Their Royal Highnesses Prince Abdullah, Prince Faisal, Royal Court Chief Fayez Tarawneh, Director of the State Security Council Prince Talal Ben Mubammad, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Jawad Anani, Planning Minister Rima Khalaf, Jordan's Ambassador in Washington Marwan Muasher and the U.S. Ambassador in Amman Wesley Egan.

## Snow, rain expected through Friday

AMMAN (J.T.) — Snow blanketed Amman and other parts of the Kingdom Wednesday disrupting public transport and prompting the government to shut down public offices, schools and universities, and forcing the Lower House of Parliament to postpone a session that was scheduled for Wednesday morning.

The Public Security Department (PSD) and the Civil Defence Department (CDD) were on the scene employing their road-clearing equipment to open main roads, offering help to stranded citizens on the highways and dealing with flooded homes in low lying districts.

Meanwhile, the Department of Meteorology on Wednesday forecast more rain throughout the country and more snow on areas rising at least 700 metres above sea

level. It said that the khamasin weather that affected the eastern Mediterranean zone was followed by several cold fronts of polar origin, thus causing a sharp drop in temperatures and the blizzard which also hit Palestine, Israel, Lebanon and Syria.

Temperatures are expected to reach four degrees Celsius during the day and to drop to zero at night said the Department of Meteorology which noted that temperatures at this time of the year normally average between 13 and 17 degrees Celsius.

According to the department, a slight improvement in weather conditions will occur on Friday but the weather will remain cold and more rain will fall in most regions.

The department said that snow fall in March is not a rarity especially if occurring

which normally lasts from March 15 to May 10 each year.

Meanwhile, the director of the Queen Alia International Airport Mahmoud Taha said that flights continued on schedule and were not really affected as a result of the snowstorm. However, he said that there were slight delays in departures of some flights due to the late arrival of the passengers at the airport.

As for the Amman Airport in Marka, services and flights continued as normal.

Reports from Salt, Jerash, Ajloun and other parts of the northern region said that many of the roads were blocked with snow but work was underway to reopen them for traffic.

The CDD had urged the public early Wednesday to refrain from going out in their

Condemning Israeli policies again  
U.N. General Assembly urges holding conference barring Israeli settlements  
EU 'deplores Israel's failure to respond' to U.N. appeals

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The General Assembly issued a new condemnation on Tuesday of Israel's failure to stop building on occupied territory south of Jerusalem and again called for a conference of parties to a Geneva Convention barring such settlements.

The vote, at a resumed emergency session of the 185-nation assembly, was 120 in favour and three against — Israel, the United States and Micronesia. Five countries — Australia, Bulgaria, Romania, Marshall Islands and Swaziland — abstained. The session was convened last April when a resolution was adopted demanding that Israel abandon plans to build 6,500

settlement units at Jabal Abu Ghneim that it occupied in 1967.

Israel continued with the project and the session was reconvened in July and again in November.

Resolutions condemning Israel's settlement activities were adopted at each of the three previous meetings by more than 130 votes. Each time Israel, the United States and Micronesia cast the only negative votes.

Work on Jabal Abu Ghneim and attacks on Israeli targets by activists helped deadlock the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians.

In its latest resolution, the assembly "reiterates its condemnation of the failure

of the government of Israel" to comply with the previous resolutions.

It repeated calls for a conference of the 188 parties to the fourth Geneva Convention on the protection of civilians in time of war, which bars settlements in occupied territory.

The conference would consider "measures to enforce the convention in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem" and ensure its respect.

The resolution again recommended that Switzerland, as repository of the 1949 Convention, convene a meeting of experts by the end of April to prepare for the conference.

Similar requests were made in the assembly's November resolution, which called for an experts meeting by the end of February 1998 that did not occur.

Switzerland proposed instead a closed meeting of experts from the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), Israel, Switzerland and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to discuss improving the application of humanitarian law in the Israeli-occupied territories.

The new resolution reiterated that "in case of continued lack of compliance by Israel," the assembly "shall reconsider the situation with a view to making fur-

ther appropriate recommendations."

The PLO's U.N. observer, Nasser Al Kidwa, said Israel was "the only state officially considered by the Security Council to be an occupying power" and the only one to reject the applicability of the fourth Geneva Convention to the territories occupied since 1967.

"Israel is the only country in the world that is engaged in settler colonialism at the end of the 20th century," he said, adding that "settlement activities represent a direct violation of basic components" of agreements

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## Cook calls for Israeli pullout from Lebanon as part of settlement

BEIRUT (AFP) — British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook arrived here on Wednesday and said he hoped for an Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon as part of a comprehensive Middle East peace settlement.

Mr. Cook, who arrived in Beirut from Damascus, where he held talks with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, said he had embarked upon a "very appropriate visit to Lebanon because it comes on the 20th anniversary of U.N. Resolution 425."

Resolution 425, passed by the U.N. Security Council in 1978, calls for Israel to conduct an immediate and unconditional troop withdrawal from neighbouring Lebanon.

"We would like to see Resolution 425 implemented but in the context of a comprehensive settlement," Mr. Cook told reporters at Beirut airport, where he was met by his Lebanese counterpart Fares Bwiz.

Mr. Cook said that while in Israel he had discussed the possibility of an Israeli withdrawal from the "security zone" set up by the Jewish state in southern Lebanon with Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai. "I did discuss with Mr. Mordechai the approach of the government of Israel to the withdrawal of forces from south Lebanon," he said. "I have discussed the matter further in Damascus."

Israel has offered to with-

draw from the buffer zone set up to protect its northern border in exchange for guarantees that the Lebanese army will rein in Hezbollah guerrillas.

Damascus, which is the main powerbroker in Lebanon with more than 30,000 troops there, and Beirut have both rejected the Israeli offer and demanded an unconditional Israeli pullout.

Mr. Cook also said he expected Washington to unveil a proposal soon to revive Israeli-Palestinian peace talks, deadlocked for the past year.

"We are in very close contact with the United States and we expect them

(Continued on page 3)

## Cook's visit to Israel: fiasco or crafted bid to pave way for U.S. peace drive?

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli officials Wednesday presented British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook's tumultuous visit to a Jewish settlement in Arab east Jerusalem as a diplomatic blunder that had dented European hopes for a key role in the peace process.

But others saw a calculated bid by Britain to underscore the international isolation of Israel's right-wing government and pave the way for a long-awaited U.S. initiative to break the deadlock in Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts.

Mr. Cook paid a one-day visit to Israel and the Palesti-

nian areas Tuesday, ostensibly to promote an European Union (EU) peace plan which presses Israel to carry out major troop withdrawals from the West Bank and freeze settlement building in exchange for greater Palestinian action against terrorism.

But even before presenting the ideas to Israeli officials, he sparked a diplomatic row with his hosts by meeting a Palestinian official at the planned site for a new Jewish settlement in Arab east Jerusalem. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu accused Mr. Cook of violating an agreement to

visit the site at Jabal Abu Ghneim, known as Har Homa by Israelis, only with Israeli officials and angrily cut short his meetings with the British diplomat.

Wednesday, Israeli officials claimed the incident illustrated a pro-Arab bias in Europe and undercut EU ambitions in the peace process.

"After Cook's visit, we think that Europe has even less of a mediating role to play in the negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians," said David Bar-Ilan, Mr. Netanyahu's media advisor.

"The Europeans systemati-

cally adopt the Palestinian positions," he told AFP, adding that Washington remained the only viable mediator.

The right-wing Jerusalem Post newspaper scored Mr. Cook's visit as a series of "miscalculations, misjudgements and mistakes" that had "dealt a severe blow to the European Union's efforts at gaining Israel's confidence."

But others said Mr. Cook was well aware before arriving that his EU initiative was a non-starter — Mr. Netanyahu has always made clear he saw no mediating role for Europe in the Palestinian negotiations

and in any case had already rejected the EU proposals.

Mr. Cook's stubborn insistence on filing his hosts over Jabal Abu Ghneim thus seemed calculated to illustrate the depth of international frustration with the deadlock in the peace process and show Israel there was a diplomatic price to pay for Mr. Netanyahu's intransigence.

"We are in total isolation — all countries have the same views [as Cook] and the Netanyahu government is to blame," said Yossi Sarid, head of the leftist Meretz Party.

Mr. Cook's actions were all

the more galling for Mr. Netanyahu — a master of public debate and media relations — in that he travelled to London and other European capitals earlier this month and came home claiming to have once again mended fences and headed off pressures for Israeli concessions.

"Netanyahu came back from Europe spreading the illusion that everything was fine, that he had conquered Europe, and now look at the results," Mr. Sarid said on Israeli Radio.

Palestinian officials who met with Mr. Cook Tuesday said he presented his actions as

designed to prepare the way for more effective pressure on Mr. Netanyahu by Washington, Israel's main ally and financier.

"There is not an EU initiative, they are supporting a U.S. initiative," said Saeb Erekat, the chief negotiator with Israel. He said Mr. Cook told Mr. Arafat that EU special envoy Miguel Moratinos would visit Washington on March 20 to brief the Americans on Mr. Cook's visit and coordinate over a U.S. initiative which could be announced late this month.

U.S. President Bill Clinton is

reportedly considering going public with a plan which would require Israel to withdraw from an additional 13 per cent of the West Bank within three months in tandem with specific actions by the Palestinians to combat terrorism.

Mr. Netanyahu sent two senior envoys to Washington Tuesday to warn that any such U.S. initiative would meet with the same steely response as Mr. Cook's Jabal Abu Ghneim adventure, Israel media reported.



## Truce panel urges Israel to spare civilian property in Lebanon

NAQOURA (AFP) — The international committee monitoring the ceasefire in south Lebanon called Wednesday on Israel to avoid harming civilian property in Lebanon.

The Monitoring Group urged strongly that Israel, or those cooperating with it, take every precaution to assure that civilian property not be

damaged in the course of their military actions," the committee said in a statement.

It said four shells fired by Israel or its allied South Lebanon Army militia slammed Friday into the village of Haddatha in south Lebanon, "damaging a mosque, five houses and

other property, including part of the electrical system."

The committee had been meeting since Tuesday at the United Nations headquarters in the border town of Naqoura to examine a complaint filed by Lebanon over the shelling.

The committee monitoring the April 1996 ceasefire

agreement is composed of representatives from France, Israel, Lebanon, Syria and the United States.

Under the terms of the accord, Israel and the Islamist Hizbollah militia agreed to avoid attacking civilians on either side of the border or launching attacks from civilian-inhabited areas.

## Turkey defends incursions into Iraq

DOHA (AFP) — Turkish Foreign Minister Ismail Cem has defended Ankara's military incursions into northern Iraq in pursuit of Kurdish rebels and said it had no intention of invading its Arab neighbour's territory.

"We are not invading northern Iraq. We are defending ourselves against operations by the separatist Kurdish Labour Party (PKK)," he said, quoted by the London-based Arab newspaper Al Sharq Al Awsat on Wednesday.

The Turkish army has been

retaliating to PKK incursions from Kurdish-held northern Iraq, Mr. Cem said, on the sidelines of an Islamic ministerial meeting in the Qatari capital.

He reiterated that Ankara's military accord with Israel was not aimed at other states. "I understand and respect the sensitivities and reservations of these countries, and I assure them the accord does not target them," he said.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharaa has said he called for Turkey to reconsid-

er its military ties with Israel, at a meeting he held with Mr. Cem on Sunday in Doha.

The two foreign ministers agreed "to work to improve bilateral relations and pursue contacts," said Mr. Cem, whose country's political dialogue with Damascus has been suspended since September 1995.

Ankara accuses Damascus of supporting the PKK, while Syria protests that Turkey is limiting the amount of water flowing down the Euphrates River into its territory.

## Turkish students clash with police, 13 injured

ANKARA (AFP) — Hundreds of leftist students protesting against lengthy prison terms sought for colleagues clashed with security forces in downtown Ankara Wednesday and 13 people were injured, police said.

The protesters hurled stones at police forces trying to disperse the demonstration, injuring 11 policemen and civilians and two journalists covering the incident, the police said.

The security forces arrested scores of students, the police said.

This was the worst act of violence in a demonstration in Ankara this year.

The protesters were denouncing a state security court decision in January to sentence eight students to prison terms of between four and 18 years for staging an anti-government protest in parliament.

But Turkey's high court of appeals overruled the verdict Wednesday, asking the state security court to retry the suspects.

The high court of appeals ruled that the previous court decision was based on insufficient evidence.



A masked Palestinian Wednesday pours oil on a hanging effigy of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu before setting it alight during a protest in Rafah in the Gaza Strip. The Palestinians were protesting against the Israeli policy of Jewish settlements (Reuters photo)

## Palestinian police stop youths stoning Israeli soldiers in Gaza

RAFAH (AFP) — Palestinian police stopped youths from pelting Israeli soldiers with stones Wednesday during a march to protest the killing of three Arab workers by soldiers last week, witnesses said.

Several dozen Palestinians joined in the march in the town of Rafah, in the southern Gaza Strip, called by the youth movement of the Fateh faction of the PLO to

denounce the "crimes of [Israeli Prime Minister] Benjamin Netanyahu."

They marched through the town, shouting slogans against Mr. Netanyahu and the killing on March 10 of three Palestinians by Israeli soldiers who opened fire on their van at a West Bank checkpoint.

The protesters marched towards the Gaza-Egypt border and began throwing

stones at an observation tower manned by Israeli soldiers there.

But Palestinian police quickly intervened to push the youths away, witnesses said.

The killing of the three workers sparked a week of riots in the West Bank between Israeli soldiers and Palestinian protesters which left one child dead and over 100 youths injured by Israeli rubber-coated bullets.

## Slain Egyptian militants wanted for deaths of 40 people

MINYA (AFP) — Four Islamists killed in a police shootout this week had participated in attacks that claimed the lives of 40 people, police sources said on Wednesday.

The militants were killed Monday in the southern Egyptian province of Minya after a gun battle with police which lasted more than five hours. A nine-year-old boy and a police recruit were also killed in the shootout.

The four were identified as Samir Abdelmotieb, 27, Hatem Taghiyan, 28, Mohammad Khalifa, 26, and Mohammad Abuzaid, 25, who used fields where wheat and fava beans are grown as a hideout, the sources said.

They were killed when police laid siege to the fields. The four men refused to surrender and traded fire with the security forces, they said.

The Islamists were responsible for "terrorist attacks" which killed 40 policemen and civilians, including alleged police informants, and left 16 people wounded, they said.

One police source said Abdelmotieb was a "dangerous criminal wanted in connection with 16 terrorist attacks," while Taghiyan was known for his "brutality."

Khalifa, a student at the faculty of agriculture in the northern province of Zagazig, capital city of the eastern province of Sharqia, was wanted in connection with 12 killings in the town of Abu Qurqas.

Abu Zaid was wanted in connection with seven deadly attacks.

An initial police report on Monday said the four were members of Egypt's main armed Gamaa Islamiya.

Police have killed 10 key Islamists in raids since March 9.

## Islamic commission struggles to improve human rights in Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — An Iranian commission is waging an uphill battle to improve human rights in the Islamic republic, where the authorities often reject the notion as a "political ploy" invented by the West to discredit countries which go their own way.

The commission, set up three years ago by a group of judges, MPs and lawyers, is sympathetic to the Islamic regime, but it seeks to spot and remove human rights violations from society.

"There are widespread violations here. Our aim is to help human rights. Torture and violence have no affinity with Islam," said the head of the commission, Mohammad-Hassan Zia-Far.

He said the commission had received 2,450 complaints in the past year, half of them from women and 50 per cent against the police.

As an example, he complained about the "numerous" detention centres run by different government organisations. "It is painful for me to say that we are suffering a great deal because of these centres," he said.

He said he was pushing to have a unified network of prisons, a task which he said will take a long time to achieve, "although we continue to supervise."

The commission has investigated the cases of several journalists and dissidents arrested for criticism or alleged spying. It has also probed complaints

from religious minorities, notably the Bahais, who are banned from practising their faith and are subjected to discrimination.

The commission has begun to educate police and security officers as well as prison guards and judges about "international and Islamic concepts of human rights."

It has pushed to have human rights principles taught in police academies, inserted in school textbooks, and debates aired on television.

Volunteers are to be recruited to work as human rights activists and periodicals will be published on the subject.

"We are after a cohesive, lawful and organised system to investigate and prove violations," Mr. Zia-Far said, urging journalists to inform his commission of such cases.

He said the commission is in contact with international rights groups to share experiences.

"We do not want to create a conflict between the Western notion of human rights and the Islamic one. We are after common ground. Human rights do not know borders. You cannot draw a fence around it," the activist said.

Iranian officials have in the past stated that certain aspects of human rights principles, accepted in the West do not conform to Islamic teachings, which often call for tough punishments for offenders.

But he said he was opposed to a decision by the U.N. human rights commission to assign a

special rapporteur to investigate violations in Iran.

"Our country is one with a great civilisation. It is an insult to have us placed in the same group with countries with a heinous human rights record," Mr. Zia-Far said.

He accused certain organisations of politicising the human rights issue and pleaded with them to engage in "sincere cooperation."

"Investigations tainted with politics only hurt the cause and expose us to accusations like we are a tool of outsiders," Mr. Zia-Far said.

But he said the U.N. rapporteur, on Iran, Maurice Coplithon, may visit Iran this summer, despite anger here over his previous negative reports.

Mr. Zia-Far insisted the commission was sincere in its efforts to correct the rights situation in Iran. "Before I took the job, I made sure it was serious," he said.

Iran has considerably opened up since President Mohammad Khatami took office in August. The president has established a

committee to protect citizens' rights.

An unprecedented debate has been raging in the Iranian media as to whether a number of municipal officials arrested for corruption were tortured during detention.

U.N. Human Rights Commissioner Mary Robinson, who visited Iran last month, said she detected a "new trend."

## 16 students killed in Iran bus crash

TEHRAN (AFP) — Sixteen medical students, all women, were killed when their bus collided head-on with a trailer truck in southwestern Iran, the second deadly accident in the region.

24 hours, the official IRNA news agency reported Wednesday.

The crash occurred late Tuesday on a road in Khuzestan province, it said. Three other people accompanying the students were also killed and many others injured.

The students were from a university in the northwestern city of Mashhad, visiting for-

mer fronts during the 1980-1988 war against Iraq.

Late Monday, seven award-winning mathematicians were killed along with two drivers when their bus turned over in a ditch.

The victims, including one who had won the gold medal at an international Olympiad, were students at Tehran's Sanati-Sharif University, a high-caliber technical school in Iran.

The Iranian media has given wide coverage to the accident and Iranian leaders sent messages of condolences over the "painful loss."

## Gulf states boost air defences to offset shortage of ground forces

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Gulf Arab states have drawn up a plan to beef up their air forces in a bid to offset a shortage in troops because of their small indigenous populations, defence analysts said here Wednesday.

The plans run parallel to expansions in other military fields and an ongoing conscription drive triggered by the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and fears over Iran.

"There is an ongoing drive

in Gulf countries to strengthen their defences but the focus is on the air force," a defence expert said at an international arms show in Abu Dhabi.

"According to my contacts with the military in this region, most of them have drawn up long-term programmes to bolster their air forces by buying advanced aircraft to make up for their relatively small ground forces."

The six Gulf Cooperation

Council (GCC) states, whose military might is in sharp contrast with their oil power, currently have more than 550 fighters and 200 attack helicopters.

The number of jets is set to exceed 750 in the next few years, as Riyadh plans to buy up to 100 U.S.-built F-16 fighters and Abu Dhabi will get 30 new French-made Mirages, plus some 80 other sophisticated jets it plans to order.

### JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

### PROGRAMME TWO

Thursday Programmes  
14:10...Cartoon — The Dinky Di's  
14:30...Doc. — The Animal Show  
15:00...French Programmes  
17:00...NBA  
18:00...Drama — The Burned Bridge  
19:00...Le Journal  
19:15...Science Magazine — A Times Crusade  
19:30...News Headlines  
19:35...Comedy — Big Brother Jake  
20:00...Drama — The Great Romance  
20:30...Drama — Dr. Quinn, the Medicine Woman  
21:10...The Oprah Winfrey Show  
22:00...News in English  
22:25...Feature film — "Hearts Adrift"  
23:59...Comedy — Never The Taiwan  
00:30...End of T.N.

### Friday Programmes

14:10...Cartoon — The Adventures of Teddy Ruxpin  
14:30...Wishbone  
15:00...French Programmes  
17:00...He Shoots, He Scores  
17:30...Doc. — Blue Water Dreaming  
18:00...Tarzan  
19:00...Le Journal  
19:15...Educational Programme — Allo La Terre  
19:30...News Headlines

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

19:35...Friends  
20:00...Documentary — Life on the Internet  
20:30...The American Cheat Show  
21:10...The Adventures of Bosco Combs  
22:00...News in English  
22:30...Mini-series: Gone in the Night (T.N.)  
00:30...End of T.N.

### PRAYER TIMES

04:20...Fair  
05:38...Sunrise/Duha  
11:43...Dhuhr  
15:10...Asr  
17:49...Maghreb  
19:07...Isha

### CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church  
Sweilieh, Tel. 5920740  
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 4632735  
St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590  
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 4622266  
Anglican Church Tel. 4624833/4624811  
St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751  
Armenian International Church Tel. 865897  
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 5688404  
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295  
Church of Jesus Christ of Lau-

ter Day Saints Tel. 464932  
St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel. 5661757  
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 4637240  
Greek Orthodox Church Tel. 4623541  
Church of Presentation, Sweilieh Tel. 5920146  
The United Catholic Church Tel. 4624757  
The English-Language Catholic Parish Tel. 4634190  
Evangelical Free Church Tel. 892679  
The Baptist Church Tel. 4624952  
The Armenian Catholic Church 771331

### WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology  
The effect of the cold air mass will continue today. Skies will be cloudy with rain, conditions prevailing, winds westerly moderate to active, and snow falling over mountainous areas with altitudes more than 700 metres above sea level. The effect of the cold air mass will gradually diminish during the day, but it will continue to be cold and cloudy with winds northwesterly moderate. On Friday, temperatures will rise slightly. In Aqaba, it will be partly cloudy, rain, winds northerly active and seas choppy.

Amman...Zero/06  
Aqaba...09/17  
Deserts...01/12  
Jordan Valley...07/15  
Yesterday's high temperatures:  
Amman 18, Aqaba 16 Humidity readings: Amman 84 per cent, Aqaba 59 per cent.

### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY  
AMBULANCE  
Dr. Abbas Al Hakim...885446  
Dr. Arafa Al Ashhab...5902507  
Dr. Ayman Al Muteaseh...57724  
Dr. Jams Jarsat...84751  
Firdous pharmacy...5661912  
Al Asema pharmacy...778336  
Nairookh pharmacy...4637055  
Al Salam pharmacy...4626730  
Yacoub pharmacy...4629435  
Shmeisani pharmacy...4637660  
Najib pharmacy...847652  
IRBID:  
Dr. Fawzi Abul Hajja...252970  
Al Quds pharmacy...46311  
ZARQA:  
Dr. Ya'qoub Al Khatib 9917720  
Khalifeh pharmacy...985417

### EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre...4637111  
Civil Defence Department 566111  
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue...4630241  
Civil Defence Emergency...199

Rescue Police 192-921111, 4637777  
Fire Brigade...4617101  
Blood Bank...7751126  
Highway Police...823402  
Traffic Police...8963901  
Public Security Dept...4630321  
Hotel Complaints...5605900  
Price Complaints...5661176  
Water & Sewerage Complaints 897467  
Amman Municipality Complaints...787111  
Telephone Information (directory assistance)...121  
Overseas Calls...010230  
Central Amman Telephone Repairs...4623101  
Abdali Tel. Repairs...5661101  
Jordan Television...773111  
Radio Jordan...774111  
J. Electricity Authority...815615  
Electric Power Co...4636381  
RJ Flight Information...44-53200  
Queen Alia Int. Airport...44-53200

### HOSPITALS

AMBULANCE  
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 9121199  
The Islamic Abdi...56661317  
Husseini Medical Centre Tel. 836313, 85656  
Luzmila...4630195  
Khalidi Maternity...46425116  
Akilahi Maternity...46424112  
Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362  
Malhas, J. Amman...4636140  
Palestine Shmeisani...5697071  
Shmeisani Hospital...5669131  
University Hospital...845845  
Al-Muasher Hospital 56672279

Al-Ahli, Abdali...56641646  
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 7710173  
Al-Bashir...77511126  
Army, Marka...89161115  
Queen Alia Hospital 560224050  
Ansal Hospital...5674155  
ZARQA:  
Zarqa Govt. Hospital...09983323  
Zarqa National Hospital...09900560  
Ibn Sina Hospital...09986732  
Al Hikma Modern Hospital...09990990  
IRBID:  
Princess Basma Hospital...021275555  
Greek Catholic Hospital...021272275  
Pn Al Nafes Hospital...021247100  
AQABA:  
Princess Haya Hospital 08151411

### FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT  
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. 44153200 where it should always be verified.  
Information on other flights are supplied on phone 44 (52700) or 441532501.

### ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights  
07:15...Sanaa (RJ)  
08:25...Bombay (RJ)  
09:15...Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)  
09:30...New Delhi (RJ)  
10:05...Muscat, Dubai (RJ)  
10:05...Beirut (RJ)  
10:40...Doha, Bahrain (RJ)  
10:45...Colombo (RJ)  
15:00...New York, Amsterdam (RJ)  
16:25...London (RJ)  
17:00...Jeddah (add) (RJ)  
17:20...Moscow (RJ)  
18:05...Athens (RJ)  
18:05...Kuwait (RJ)  
19:10...Abu Dhabi, Al 'Ain (RJ)  
19:20...Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ)  
22:50...Lamaca (RJ)  
01:00...Jeddah (add) (RJ)  
Other Flights  
13:15...Riyadh (SV)  
14:10...Sharjah (AH)  
15:00...Doha (QR)  
15:20...Muscat, Doha (GF)  
16:00...Dubai (EK)  
16:30...Rome (AZ)  
20:00...Tel Aviv (MS)  
20:10...Beirut (ME)  
20:40...Cairo (MS)  
23:10...Istanbul (TK)  
23:30...London, Beirut (BA)

### DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights  
06:20...Beirut (RJ)  
07:25...Moscow (RJ)  
10:50...Abu Dhabi, Al 'Ain (RJ)  
11:00...Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)  
11:30...Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)  
12:00...Jeddah (RJ)  
12:05...Kuwait (RJ)  
12:10...Paris (RJ)  
12:15...London (RJ)  
12:20...Athens (RJ)  
19:35...Lamaca (RJ)  
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20:10...Cairo (RJ)  
20:30...Jeddah (RJ)  
23:00...Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)  
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00:35...Amsterdam (KL)  
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17:00...Muscat, Dubai (EK)  
17:30...Rome (AZ)  
21:20...Tel Aviv (LY)  
21:40...Cairo (MS)  
08:00...Beirut (ME)  
Royal Wings  
(For Thursday and Friday)  
06:45 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)  
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17:55...Tel Aviv (RW)  
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21:50...Aqaba (RW)

### 22:50 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)

### DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights  
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16:45 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)  
17:55...Tel Aviv (RW)  
20:30...Amman (QAIA) (RW)  
21:50...Aqaba (RW)

### Other Flights

00:35...Amsterdam (KL)<



## Queen, Majali meet with UNU/ILA board

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor chaired a meeting with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and the Vice Chair of the United Nations University/International Leadership Academy (UNU/ILA) Advisory Committee, Hisashi Owada, in New York, according to a press release Wednesday.

Queen Noor, who chairs the UNU/ILA's Advisory Committee, discussed the format and selection process of the academy's second 1998 International Leadership Programme, as well as the 1999 Advanced Leadership and Global Leadership Travel programmes.

The Queen noted that the 1998 International Leadership Programme will introduce introductory training courses on creativity and leadership skills conducted by the "Centre for Creative Leadership" in the United States. She emphasised the importance of increasing scholarship opportunities for participants from developing countries, the

statement said.

Norway, Arab Bank, the UNDP and the UNFPA have offered UNU/ILA scholarship to candidates from developing countries, while a number of countries supported their candidates at last year's International Leadership Programme.

The International Leadership Programme is a four-week course that will comprise interactive seminars and workshops on issues of peace, security and global leadership challenges between 60 participants selected from throughout the world and international keynote speakers. The speakers will include current and former leaders, high-level United Nations and government officials, scholars, heads of political parties and directors of international organisations. The programme will also involve a field study component of travel to different regions of the world, according to the statement.

The Advanced Leadership Programme is an eight-week

in-depth training programme for a group of 20 participants selected from the 1997 and 1998 Leadership Programmes. The participants will focus on a particular global issue, take part in independent research and conclude with a thesis that will be submitted to the academy.

The Global Leadership Travel Programme is a pioneering/experimental four-month programme that will comprise a preliminary two-week session in Amman, followed by travel to Africa, Asia, Europe, and North and South America.

According to UNU/ILA Director Adel Safy, the participants will "engage in activities, seminars and visits to various leaders in government, civil society, academic and social institutions." Upon their return to Amman, the participants will prepare and submit a dissertation based on their research and experiences, the announcement read.

The International Leadership Academy, which is based

in Amman, is the first global leadership training facility as well as the first U.N. institution to be initiated and established in the Middle East. The academy co-sponsored an International Conference on Mediation and Conflict Resolution in Northern Ireland as well as a Global Leadership Week at the University of Maryland last November. It is working in cooperation with the International University in Islamabad and a group of UNU/ILA alumni to prepare the First Regional Leadership Conference in Islamabad. The UNU/ILA seeks to provide training in leadership skills and attitudes, while fostering commitment to sustainable development and democracy, civil society institutions, and peaceful resolution of disputes, according to the statement.

The rector of the United Nations University (UNU), Hans van Grinkel, and Dr. Safy attended the meeting with the Queen.

## Rifai meets with Yemeni president at parliamentary union meeting

SANAA (Petra) — Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh on Wednesday received Jordanian Senate Speaker Zeid Rifai and the delegation accompanying him to the 31st meeting of the Arab Parliamentary Union (APU), which is being held in the Yemeni capital of Sanaa.

Mr. Rifai conveyed condolences from His Majesty King Hussein to Mr. Saleh on the death of former Yemeni President Sheikh Abdul Rahman Al Iryani.

He also met Yemeni Prime Minister Faraj Ben Ghanem, with whom he

discussed Jordanian-Yemeni cooperation and reviewed the APU's meetings, which have been dedicated to enhancing Arab solidarity toward the protection of Arab Jerusalem.

Mr. Rifai stressed the importance of Arab solidarity, which he said is needed in the face of the looming dangers in Palestine, the challenges facing the Arab and Muslim nations, and the deadlock in the peace process resulting from Israel's intransigence and disregard for signed accords.

The Senate speaker

expressed Jordan's hope for stronger relations with Yemen.

In his address delivered on Jordan's behalf to the APU meeting, Mr. Rifai said Israel's measures in the occupied Arab territories of Palestine, Syria and Lebanon constitute a flagrant violation of international legitimacy and open the door for an escalation of violence in the region.

Mr. Rifai said Israel's refusal to implement its peace agreements was behind the present deadlock

and the instability in the whole region.

He voiced Jordan's demand that the sanctions imposed on Iraq, Libya and Sudan be lifted because, he said, they are detrimental to people and contravene human rights principles.

Noting that King Hussein has repeatedly called attention to the dangers inherent in Israel's settlement programmes and its drive to alter the character of Arab Jerusalem, Mr. Rifai said the Arab World must immediately undertake concerted action to deal with the situation.

## Irbid man stabs wife, 4 children to death

AMMAN (Petra) — A 30-year old man from Kura in Irbid governorate Wednesday killed his 28-year-old wife and four children and afterwards surrendered himself to the police.

The man, identified as A.K., stabbed to death his wife, identified as F., and his four children, aged eight, seven, five and three years.

The five bodies were taken to Princess Basma Hospital for autopsy to define the cause of death. Examination showed stab wounds in various parts of their bodies, according to hospital reports.

Asked about the motives behind his crime, the man said he killed them out of desperation, adding that he was unable to support his family, and that he thought of killing them more than once.

## Germany grants JD8 million toward social programme

AMMAN (J.T.) — German Ambassador Peter Mende and Acting Minister of Planning Nasser Lawzi Wednesday signed an agreement which provides a German financial contribution of JD8 million to the Social Productivity Programme, according to a German embassy press release.

The measures of the programme aim at improving the living conditions of some 140,000 people living in areas within and near Amman. The programme areas belong in the housing areas defined by the Jordanian government in consultation with the World Bank as having a high rate of poor households, thus being in particular need of infrastructure improvements, the statement said.

The activities will comprise, among other things, the construction of water supply and wastewater networks and streets and footpaths, as well as the expansion and rehabilitation of schools and community centres.

The amount JD8 million is part of the JD24 million Germany presented to Jordan in 1997. Generally, Jordan has been one of the main beneficiaries of German economic cooperation, with an overall amount of nearly JD800 million, most of which was spent on projects in the water and irrigation sector, the announcement read.

Following the signing of the agreement, Mr. Lawzi voiced Jordan's deep appreciation to Germany for its continued backing of development projects, particularly the government-sponsored plan to improve the infrastructure of the poor districts that His Majesty King Hussein announced toward the end of the past year during a visit to the Ministry of Planning.

The German grant, he said, was the first commitment

ment by a donor nation toward implementing this vital project.

According to the government plan, a total of JD431 million will be spent on infrastructure services in poor districts and refugee camps over the coming few years.

For his part, Mr. Mende said the grant aims at helping the Jordanian government improve the living conditions of the citizens living in the underdeveloped regions.

"We want the people of Jordan to know that Germany and the European Union are very concerned over helping Jordan carry out economic development schemes, and we are always ready and we will carefully study all Jordanian requests towards this objective," Mr. Mende said.

Ministry of Planning officials and German embassy staff were present at the signing ceremony.

## Regent, Annan focus talks on human dimension of peace, visit refugee camps

(Continued from page 1)

launched an impassioned appeal "to all governments with capacity to give to give, freely and generously so that we can continue to provide assistance to the refugees."

"The international community should do more than speaking."

The secretary general was here on the first leg of

a 10-day "goodwill" tour of the Middle East which took him to Cairo later yesterday and will continue to Lebanon, Syria, the Palestinian self-rule areas and Israel.

"I will be discussing the peace process, including of course the question of refugees and their conditions," he said.

Mr. Annan said he will try to push the peace

process forward by "encouraging all parties concerned to have the courage, the wisdom and the vision to make the compromises necessary to attain peace and work with the mediators in making that possible."

Israeli-Palestinian talks have been stalled since last March.

The U.S. was planning to propose an Israeli withdrawal

from 13 per cent of the West Bank, in order to bring the two sides back to the negotiating table.

"I support the efforts of the U.S. government, and I encourage the parties to work with them constructively, in a practical way, and speedily, to find a solution before matters get worse," Mr. Annan said.

## U.N. General Assembly urges holding conference barring Israeli settlements

(Continued from page 1)

between Israel and the Palestinians.

Israeli Ambassador Dore Gold said there had never been a conference of the parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, even when the Soviet Union invaded Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan, while Israel's occupation of the West

Bank and Gaza Strip stemmed from a defensive war.

He said the Palestinian National Authority had chosen a "deliberate strategy of constant crisis," seeking through international pressure "not land for peace, but land for nothing."

U.S. Ambassador Bill Richardson said the resolu-

tion would "complicate, not enhance, Middle East peace efforts."

He said Switzerland's proposal for a meeting of Palestinian and Israeli experts under the auspices of the ICRC was in harmony with the basic premise of the peace process — "that the parties themselves must discuss their differences in direct, face-

to-face negotiations."

Britain's Sir John Weston, speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU), said it "deplores Israel's failure to respond" to appeals "to cease construction work in Jahal Abu Ghneim/Har Homa" and to suspend the development of settlements in the occupied territories.

## Cook calls for Israeli pullout from Lebanon as part of settlement

(Continued from page 1)

to come forward with a plan soon on the Palestinian track," he said.

Mr. Cook, who is representing the 15-nation European Union and is accompanied by EU special envoy to the Middle East Miguel Moratinos on his regional tour, left from the airport for the foreign ministry for talks with Mr. Bweiz.

Before travelling to Beirut, the British foreign secretary met in Damascus with Mr. Assad and his Syrian counterpart Farouq Al Shara.

He called in the Syrian capital for a quick resumption of peace talks

between Israel and its Arab neighbours.

"We want peace talks to resume as soon as possible," Mr. Cook told reporters. "It is a tragedy that we have lost so much time."

Syrian-Israeli peace talks have been frozen for two years with Damascus insisting the Israeli government honour a reported agreement in principle by the previous Israeli administration to withdraw from the occupied Golan Heights.

The Jewish state occupied the strategic plateau during the 1967 Middle East war and illegally annexed it in 1981.

Mr. Cook also repeated

a call on Israel to stop expansion of Jewish settlements in Palestinian territories, saying they were an obstacle to peace.

While in Israel on Tuesday, Mr. Cook sparked a diplomatic incident with the government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu by meeting Palestinian officials at the site of a controversial Jewish settlement in Arab east Jerusalem.

Mr. Shara, the Syrian foreign minister, described the uproar over Cook's visit to the Jahal Abu Ghneim settlement site as "concrete proof that Israel doesn't care about peace in the Middle East."

Mr. Cook also angered Mr. Netanyahu by pressing an EU initiative which calls on Israel to freeze settlement building and carry out major West Bank troop withdrawals.

The British foreign secretary is scheduled to return home from Beirut after a tour which has taken him to Syria, Israel, the Palestinian territories, Egypt and Jordan.

Britain is the current president of the 15-nation European Union and Mr. Cook has been accompanied during his tour by the EU special envoy to the Middle East, Miguel Moratinos.

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Polio immunisation campaign extended

AMMAN (Petra) — The nationwide polio immunisation campaign that started on Saturday has been extended by two days due to the inclement weather conditions prevailing in the Kingdom. The campaign, which was supposed to end today, has so far reached 90 per cent of the target group, children under the age of five.

#### Cabinet endorses appointment of new officials

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Cabinet on Tuesday endorsed the appointment of Ihsan Ramzi, former director general of Jordan Radio and Television Corporation (JRTVC), as secretary general of the Ministry of Information, succeeding the late Mohammad Amin, according to a report in Al Ra'i. The Cabinet also endorsed the appointment of Nasser Judeh, director of Jordan Television, as director general of JRTVC, and the appointment of Mahmoud Fadel Tal as secretary general of the Ministry of Culture.

### what's going on

**RELIGIOUS**  
\* "The Heifer" at Institute Cervantes, Jabel Amman, on Thursday at 5:30 p.m.  
\* Italian Architecture in Rome and Venice since AD 1600 — "Age of the Baroque" and a visit to the Church of the Museum of the Baroque in Dam Al Fannan, Jabel Amman, on Thursday March 19 at 5:30 p.m. (free admission and commentary on invitation by Dr. Muzen Arslan)  
\* "Dances With Wolves" at the American Centre, Amman, on Thursday March 19 at 7:00 p.m.  
**LAUNCHES**  
\* "The Heifer" at Institute Cervantes, Jabel Amman, on Thursday March 19 at 5:30 p.m. (free admission and commentary on invitation by Dr. Muzen Arslan)  
\* "Dances With Wolves" at the American Centre, Amman, on Thursday March 19 at 7:00 p.m.  
**EXCURSIONS**  
\* "Dances With Wolves" at the American Centre, Amman, on Thursday March 19 at 7:00 p.m.  
\* "The Heifer" at Institute Cervantes, Jabel Amman, on Thursday March 19 at 5:30 p.m. (free admission and commentary on invitation by Dr. Muzen Arslan)  
\* "Dances With Wolves" at the American Centre, Amman, on Thursday March 19 at 7:00 p.m.  
**CLASSES**  
\* "The Heifer" at Institute Cervantes, Jabel Amman, on Thursday March 19 at 5:30 p.m. (free admission and commentary on invitation by Dr. Muzen Arslan)  
\* "Dances With Wolves" at the American Centre, Amman, on Thursday March 19 at 7:00 p.m.



SNOWMAN IN AMMAN: Four men take advantage of the snow left by the storm that hit Amman overnight Tuesday-Wednesday to build a snowman. The storm virtually shut down the capital, closing schools and government offices. More snow at high elevations is predicted for today, along with rain in other locales (Photo by Yousef 'Allan)

## Archaeology group promoting public awareness through local, international outings

By Nadia Mukhlis  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — As part of efforts to raise society's awareness on the need to protect the country's archaeological heritage, the Friends of Archaeology (FOA) organise local and international trips, according to Rana Naber, member of the FOA administrative committee and media spokesperson.

Last year, the FOA conducted archaeological, cultural, historical, religious, environmental and geological camping and overnight trips, including camping trips to Dana Wildlife Reserve and Wadi Rum. Ms. Naber said.

Two other overnight trips to the city of Agaba and Petra were organised, Ms. Naber added.

The home excursions included educational trips, which have the goal of involving both children and adults in learning experiences, she said.

One outing took participants to the Citadel archaeological museum, where Nelly Lama, an art critic and an education

committee member, toured the group.

A trip was also organised to the ancient Roman city of Pella, where Richard Tanner, a geography teacher at Amman Baccalaureate School and an education committee member, divided the participants into three groups to try and determine the number of people that lived in the ancient city, she explained.

As for international trips, the FOA sponsored two last year to Syria, where the participants visited the ruins of Palmyra, Bosra, Sweda, Qanaawat and Ezraa, and to China, where the group of 47 members visited Beijing, Xian and Guilin. Ms. Naber said.

The FOA also conducted several other activities last year, all aiming at raising societal awareness on the need to protect the archaeological wealth of Jordan. Ms. Naber said. A total of 29 lectures were presented by professors and professionals working in the field, all focusing on archaeological subjects

and other related topics such as conservation, restoration, environment and geology.

Moreover, the FOA publishes bi-monthly English and Arabic newsletters that compile items of publications, excavations and archaeological reports and serve as an informative resource for members, archaeological institutions, universities and other interested individuals and institution, she said.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism and with funding by the Canadian embassy, the FOA is currently implementing a media awareness project consisting of television commercials focusing on the importance of protecting the rich cultural heritage of Jordan. Ms. Naber said.

The centre also has a library housing books, reports, reviews, newspaper clippings and maps that is expanding due to generous donations by members. Ms. Naber concluded.







# World News

## Indonesian students injured in clashes with security forces

JAKARTA (AFP) — Indonesian students maintained their pressure to demand reforms despite clashes with security forces which left at least 28 people injured.

Demonstrations were held in Jakarta and Padang, West Sumatra, within hours of clashes in Solo and in Surabaya Tuesday.

Students of the 11 March University in Solo, Central Java, were violently forced back onto their campus after they attempted to take an anti-government protest onto the streets, the Kompas Daily said. Police fired tear gas.

Ari Kristono of the emergency team at the university said 25 students were taken to hospital after the clash but only four were detained, Kompas reported.

Local police chief Colonel Riswahyono said police took action after students threw stones at security forces. In Surabaya, the capital of East Java, some 200 students rallied at the Teachers' University. At least three students were injured after they were beaten by baton-wielding riot police, a witness said.

The Surabaya students, who had been protesting the new cabinet sworn in by President Suharto, had attempted to pass the campus gate, the witness said.

Wednesday, around 70 students at the private Jakarta University held a peaceful rally demanding lower prices and widening reforms, witnesses said. University staff said there were a lot of plain clothes police among the onlookers, but no uniformed security forces.

In Padang, West Sumatra, some 200 students of the state Andalas University held a rally, residents said.

The students said the new cabinet should report the assets of their children as well as spouses and their own wealth. They also called for government reforms and immediate efforts to ease the country's economic crisis, especially to provide affordable food and medicine.

Mr. Suharto ordered the 36 new ministers he swore in Monday to report their wealth and that of their spouse, as part of a drive towards a clean government.

In Surabaya, police were seen on standby at the entrance gate of at least two state universities, the Airlangga University and the Teachers' University, residents said.

Thousands of students have conducted peaceful rallies in campuses in scores of towns, sometimes gathering up to 10,000 people, to demand comprehensive reforms to end the crisis.

Security officials have warned they will not tolerate street rallies but would allow demonstrations to proceed if held within the confines of their universities.

Indonesian authorities have said they will allow student rallies on campuses, but warned that street protests will not be tolerated.

Military chief General Wiranto called Tuesday for students to open dialogue with military representatives to air their grievances rather than stage demonstrations.



Presidential candidate Karen Demirchyan speaks during an interview March 17. Prime Minister and Acting President Robert Kocharyan will face Mr. Demirchyan, Armenia's Soviet-era leader in a March 30 second-round election (Reuters photo)

## OSCE slams Armenia poll, demands anti-fraud moves

YEREVAN (AFP) — The chief OSCE election monitor slammed Armenia's "deeply flawed" presidential vote Wednesday, warning he would not validate the ballot unless urgent measures to prevent fraud were taken ahead of a March 30 run-off.

Sam Brown, head of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) mission which monitored Monday's vote, said the ballot was tainted in around 15 per cent of polling districts.

OSCE and Council of Europe election officials catalogued problems with the voting process, voting by the military; the use of state resources; the presence of police and other unauthorised personnel at polling stations; media bias; and campaign violence.

The irregularities "could have raised serious doubts about the outcome had the result been close," said Mr. Brown.

However, "although it (the election) was deeply flawed, we don't think that the outcome would have been changed by any of the violations that we observed."

But he went on to warn that the decisive round in two weeks time "has to be a lot better, or it won't get a clean bill of health."

With more than 60 per cent of votes counted, Prime Minister Robert Kocharyan, who is also acting president, was leading rival Karen Demirchyan by a margin of 38.8 per cent to 30.52 per cent.

Under Armenian election law, a candidate must garner more than 50 per cent of the vote to win the first round outright.

The government of Armenia should take immediate steps to address the problems outlined in this statement prior to the second round, said Mr. Brown.

Although the OSCE official declined to apportion blame for the irregularities, Lord Russell Johnson, head of the Council of Europe monitors, said they were "mainly caused by over

zealousness of mid-level electoral officials and did not represent a coordinated policy by the authorities."

International observers would study opposition claims of widespread violations of the electoral law once concrete evidence had been produced, he added.

The election, prompted by the abrupt resignation early February of incumbent Levon Ter-Petrosian, became mired in allegations of ballot-rigging as soon as the official campaign ended Sunday night.

One election official said she had caught someone trying to drop 21 voting slips into a ballot box, while another said youths stuffed some 600 voting slips for Mr. Kocharyan into a ballot box.

Observers from the Council of Europe, which is currently considering Armenia's membership application, said some 174 unregistered Armenian soldiers had cast their ballots at a separate polling station. Other troops told AFP that they had been instructed to vote for Mr. Kocharyan by their officers.

Tuesday seven candidates, including leading contenders Demirchyan, Communist leader Sergei Badalian and opposition nationalist Vazgen Manukian, issued a signed statement complaining of gross voting irregularities.

However, only Badalian stated unequivocally that he considered the results of the first round invalid.

Armenian Central Election Committee chief Khachatur Beirjian, however, dismissed the complaint, saying: "I view this statement as political and not legal."

The fraud charges bore a dark resemblance to allegations which marred Armenia's last presidential polls in 1996, which saw the official winner — Ter-Petrosian — send tanks into the streets of Yerevan to crush mass protests by supporters of his challenger Manukian.

## Korean peace talks resume as North denies offer to South

GENEVA (AFP) — Four-party talks to bring permanent peace to the Korean Peninsula resumed here Wednesday, amid a sideline row between Pyongyang and Seoul over the possibility of direct negotiations.

The head delegates of the four parties to the Geneva talks — grouping the United States and China, as well as the two Koreas — began talks at 10:00 a.m. (0900 GMT), following reports of progress during Tuesday's session.

However, proceedings were partly overshadowed by confusion over an apparent North Korean offer — later denied — to resume an inter-Korean dialogue suspended since 1994.

South Korean Foreign Minister Park Chung-Soo told a cabinet meeting in Seoul Wednesday that the deputy head of the North Korean delegation in Geneva, Li Gun, had offered to resume direct

negotiations.

"Li Gun, told (the South's) Yoo Myung-Hwa, director for the North American Affairs Bureau, that Pyongyang is willing to have inter-Korean dialogue in the near future," Mr. Park said.

However, Mr. Li swiftly denied making any such offer.

"It is nonsense," he said, accusing the South Koreans of "playing games."

Stressing that he had no authority to propose an inter-Korean dialogue, Mr. Li said his only brief in Geneva was to push ahead the four-party peace talks.

"Inter-Korean issues should not be brought up here," he said. In Seoul, the South Korean foreign ministry officials admitted to some uncertainty over the nature of Mr. Li's alleged remarks.

"It was not a formal offer. We don't know what it was," said one official, who

did not rule out the possibility that Li Gun had been floating a trial balloon.

Inter-Korean talks were cut off after the sudden death of the North's founder Kim Il-Sung in 1994 on the grounds that Seoul did not express condolences to Pyongyang.

Meanwhile, delegates in Geneva said some headway had been made in the four-party talks Tuesday.

Chinese head delegate Chen Jian told reporters that the discussions had "made some progress" — an assessment echoed by a South Korean official, who nevertheless qualified the progress as "modest."

"The fact that we are still talking is also progress," he added.

This is the second round of the four-party peace talks following a landmark meeting here last December aimed at thrashing out a permanent peace treaty to replace the current

armistice that ended the 1950-53 Korean war.

The talks are significant because they are the first under newly installed South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung, who has called for an exchange of special envoys and a possible summit with North Korea.

North Korea has yet to reply, and the South had hoped for some informal contacts to bring up the issue at these talks.

China's Chen Jian said Tuesday that after two days of talks "all the parties have had an occasion to state their views and positions."

"The marvel is that it was done in a frank and calm atmosphere," he said.

"We know where the limits are and how we can manoeuvre within these limits," he said, adding that now the four parties had to "find a compromise within these limits."

## Yeltsin continues treatment outside Moscow

MOSCOW (R) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin remained out of public view for the sixth day Wednesday after retreating to a residence outside Moscow with a respiratory infection.

The Kremlin said Mr. Yeltsin, 67, was coughing less Wednesday and regaining his voice, but he has not attended any official functions since last Thursday and has cancelled all engagements for the rest of the week.

"Russian President B.N. Yeltsin's condition is stable today. He is coughing less, he is regaining his voice and his temperature is in the normal range," the presidential press service said in a statement.

It said the results of blood analyses were positive, which meant inflammation of his

throat and respiratory tracts was being stopped.

The press service said Mr. Yeltsin had met Valentin Yumashev, his chief of staff, and had been given permission by doctors to work in his study at the Gorky-9 residence outside Moscow from now on.

It did not say when the president would return to his Kremlin office.

Doctors said Tuesday Mr. Yeltsin needed developing more serious health problems if he rushed his return to work. But friends and aides who have seen him say he is "raring to go."

Some Russian media and political analysts have said his illness is politically convenient and allowed him to postpone a meeting planned for Thursday with the heads of 11 ex-Soviet

republics grouped with Russia in the Commonwealth of Independent States.

They suggested the prospect of the tricky summit may have helped make Mr. Yeltsin feel out of sorts.

Wednesday's Komsomolskaya Pravda newspaper quoted Kremlin sources as saying Mr. Yeltsin was not actually that ill, despite official reports his doctors had put him on antibiotics and advised him to rest.

"Could Yeltsin's illness be diplomatic?" the newspaper asked in a banner headline.

"Something magical is going on nowadays with the president's health," the popular daily Moskovsky Komsomolets said on the front page of its Wednesday edition. It compared Mr. Yeltsin's illness with the unseasonable cold snaps

Moscow has been suffering.

"It is as fickle as the spring weather: It froze over, then there was a thaw and then — boom — black ice on the roads," the daily added, making clear it thought the summit had something to do with Mr. Yeltsin's changeable condition.

At the previous CIS summit in the Moldovan capital Chisinau last October, Mr. Yeltsin came under fire from other leaders for the failure of the Moscow-led organisation to break down barriers which appeared with the reintroduction of capitalism.

Mr. Yeltsin, keen to appeal to popular nostalgia for the Soviet Union where it suits him, has said he is anxious to revive the looser grouping and set great store by the Moscow summit.

## Trial of 51 on Rwandan genocide charges opens

BYUMBA, Rwanda (AFP) — Fifty-one people accused of genocide and related crimes in Rwanda in 1994 went on trial Wednesday, defended by both Rwandan and foreign lawyers, in this central northern town.

The defendants comprised the largest number to go on trial simultaneously since Rwanda began trying suspects from the mass slaughter of minority Tutsis and moderate Hutus, in which between 500,000 and 800,000 people died.

The accused are jointly accused of criminal association, looting and genocide from April 7, 1994, the day the massacres began after an attack in which Hutu President Juvenal Habyarimana was killed when his plane was shot down.

They are accused of being responsible for the death of at least 60 people on Muhura hill in the Byumba district.

Fourteen lawyers have been appointed to represent the defendants, as well as 15 civil parties to the trial. The defence team includes seven Rwandans and seven members of the international association Avocats Sans Frontières (Lawyers without Borders).

"It's very courageous of

Rwandan lawyers to defend the genocide suspects, in the current context, because Rwandans find it hard to understand or accept the right to a defence," the ASF mission head in Rwanda, Marielle Hallez, told AFP.

The genocide largely ended when rebels of the mainly Tutsi Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) seized power in July 1994, but the country was deeply traumatised by the wholesale slaughter and still faces conflict between extremist Hutu insurgents and the Tutsi-dominated army.

Last year, Rwandan courts heard 304 cases, in which 108 defendants were sentenced to death and 103 jailed for life.

Only 17 were acquitted. ASF assisted 44 per cent of the defendants and 27 per cent of civil parties to the trials.

More than 130,000 suspects in the 1994 massacres are currently in Rwanda's overcrowded prisons awaiting trial in the country's courts.

These are separate from the U.N. international criminal tribunal for Rwanda based in Arusha, Tanzania, which was set up by the U.N. Security Council in November 1994 to track down and try prime genocide suspects, but has not yet handed down any verdicts.

## U.S. scientists claim proof birds descended from dinosaurs

WASHINGTON (AFP) — U.S. palaeontologists have discovered a fossil in Madagascar proving that the first birds descended directly from clawed, meat-eating dinosaurs, the weekly Science says in its forthcoming issue.

Research team leader Catherine Forster, of the State University of New York at Stony Brook, said the 65-to-70 million-year-old fossil has long, feather-bearing bones extending

from the forelimbs, a clear indication the animal was able to fly.

But, unlike most birds, "Rahona," as the find has been named in Madagascan — meaning "menace from the clouds" — has a long, bony tail and a sickle-shaped claw at the end of its second toe.

The researchers said this rare claw is identical to one featured by a family of predator dinosaurs known as theropods, which many

experts believe directly preceded the first bird, or archaopteryx.

"This discovery lends a lot of weight to the idea that birds are a side branch of the theropod family tree," said Ms. Forster.

"This new fossil is one of the strongest last nails in the coffin of those who doubt that dinosaurs had anything to do with the origin of birds," she added.

Palaeontologists have long been divided on the

idea that birds descended from dinosaurs.

The discovery in Germany last century of two 150-million-year-old fossilised archaopteryx, believed to be the first winged reptile, gave rise to the theory linking the genealogy of birds and dinosaurs. Over the years, however, scientists noted several significant skeletal differences between the two creatures, throwing the theory into serious doubt.



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## Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

### Government ready to cancel tax, amend draft law on saving funds — Shahin

THE DIRECTOR of the external operations department at the Central Bank of Jordan who headed the committee that prepared the draft law for private saving funds emphasised Tuesday that amendments will be made to some articles of the draft law. Topping the amendments will be the cancellation of the article related to imposing a tax on amounts drawn from saving funds.

He affirmed that the government is ready for dialogue and to treat the subject with all transparency and in a democratic way. "The government's first and last concern is for the beneficiary," the director, Mohammad Said Shahin, said noting that the committee which prepared the draft law has benefited from all ideas that were aired.

Mr. Shahin indicated that there is a tendency to involve representatives of the saving funds in the control commission which will be entrusted in implementing the law. He emphasised that there is no reason to take quick actions, make quick judgements or to dissolve the funds "because the door for dialogue is still open and will never be closed."

Mr. Shahin denied that the draft law is in violation of the articles of the Jordanian constitution.

"The management of the funds will be the responsibility of the elected commissioners

who will be chosen by the members," he explained stressing that "the government will not interfere in managing the investments of the saving funds."

Asked about the article regarding placing an investment advisor for these funds, Mr. Shahin replied: "It is expected that investment operations be managed by persons who have experience in the investment sphere. Accordingly, the management of these funds should contract an advisor to manage the fund's investment portfolio in order to optimise the interests which would dwarf the commissions that banks would charge."

Mr. Shahin indicated that the draft law will put the bases and general principles for investment policies in order to be presented to the general assemblies for approval and, as such, guarantee a high degree of financial reform. He emphasised that the draft law will not affect the present rights of the savers and that it will include principles which will ensure the funds will not be mismanaged.

The Central Bank official concluded by pointing out that the draft law was prepared with the help of advisors, lawyers and local investment experts without any assistance from foreign expertise (Al Dustour).

## Asia still sparkles as foreign direct investment mecca

GENEVA (AFP) — Business confidence in Asia remains strong despite the current financial crisis according to a U.N. study showing that many multinational firms intend to boost investment in the region.

The joint study by the U.N. Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), published Wednesday, questioned 500 of the world's top companies, but not banks, on their investment intentions in East and South East Asia.

One quarter of the 198 firms that responded said they planned to boost direct investment in the region in the short to medium term and 62 per cent said they would continue existing business plans.

Just 12 per cent of respondents said they were planning investment cut-backs.

The vast majority believe direct investment prospects in the area had not changed, with 13 per cent saying they had actually improved, according to the survey which was conducted in mid-February.

Financial turmoil in Asia began in July with devaluation of the Thai baht. That move sparked off a successive round of regional currency falls which led to a rout of most Asian stockmarkets.

"The results clearly show that multinational

corporations are keenly interested in the region for direct investment in the production of goods and services," UNCTAD Secretary-General Rubens Ricupero told journalists.

"This augurs well for recovery in the region," he added.

Said ICC Secretary General Maria Livanos Cattaui: "This is a resounding vote of confidence in the economic fundamentals of East and South East Asia and the region's long-term prospects."

European companies, late to enter the Asian arena, appear to be the most upbeat, with 34 per cent actively seeking to expand their operations in Asia and only 11 per cent planning reductions. That compares with 19 per cent for North American and Japanese firms planning expansion and 10 per cent for those in developing Asian countries.

About 86 per cent of the Europeans who sent in responses said their long-term view of the region remained unchanged, compared to 84 per cent of Americans and 56 per cent of Japanese.

Ms. Cattaui said the survey stressed the differences between the reactions of direct investors and those of portfolio investors and banks whose actions — a stampede from Asian stock and currency markets — had been the centre of attention.

Direct investment was motivated by "strategic interests," such as market access, and tended to involve long-term relationships, she said.

While equity investment and bank lending to the worst hit countries — Thailand, Malaysia, South Korea, Malaysia and the Philippines — slumped during the second half of last year, foreign direct investment flows to the region are estimated to remain close to pre-crisis levels, the ICC and UNCTAD said.

Foreign direct investment flows to the five countries last year totalled an estimated \$80 billion in 1997 compared to \$77 billion in 1996, according to UNCTAD and the ICC.

Lower costs for such things as property, land and locally-made equipment because of plunging currencies "create immediate incentives for additional direct investment" senior UNCTAD investment expert said.

But a slump in growth has already reduced demand in some Asian countries and this could slow down inward foreign investment flows for businesses geared to domestic markets, particularly those in service sectors.

The survey also found that Asian firms plan to invest mainly in neighbouring countries as the crisis restricted the financial ability of quite a few to target offshore markets.

## Japan credit crunch rattles small business

TOKYO (Agencies) — Japan's credit crunch is hastening bankruptcies, rattling small business owners and being blamed for a string of suicides — but there is little consensus on its implications for the nation's beleaguered economy.

The severity of the credit crunch prompted business leaders to call on Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto to take more steps to ease the problem.

Faced with the introduction of stricter supervision in April, Japanese banks began restricting loans late last year in an effort to boost their capital ratios.

Banks are refusing to roll over loans, calling them in early or asking for more collateral. In addition, they are generally reluctant to extend new credit, experts and small business groups say.

Economists differ on the seriousness of the threat posed to Japan's ailing economy by the credit crunch and by the spectre of increasing bankruptcies, with some saying unfit firms must be allowed to fail but others fearing too many collapses could batter confidence.

Surveys show firms of all sizes and across all industries are finding borrowing from banks more difficult. In some cases, banks are so desperate they are asking large companies to return loans for just the last day of March, when they close their books, one government survey said.

But it is small and medium-sized firms, which have

fewer avenues for obtaining funds, that are having the toughest time.

"The crunch has come at the same time as the economy is doing badly and firms that would normally have coped with a loan to tide them over are now not getting one," said Koji Harakawa, planning and research director at the Federation of Small Business Associations.

Small and medium-sized firms account for 99 per cent of Japan's total number of companies, 80 per cent of output and 70 per cent of the workforce.

Bankruptcies directly triggered by the credit crunch have begun to emerge and will rise significantly, said Noriyoshi Kobayashi, senior researcher at Teikoku Data Bank, a private research firm that gathers information on business failures.

"The credit crunch is another kick in the teeth for firms already in pain," he said. "Small business owners are rattled."

Two medium-sized listed firms, Food Trader Tokushoku Ltd. and Daido Concrete, were recently forced to file for bankruptcy when they could not obtain funds.

The sense that the credit crunch is making bad times worse has been strengthened recently by the triple suicide of the owners of three car parts firms, followed by the suicide of a picture frame company president and his wife who left a note reading: "We can't meet our payroll. Please forgive us."

The government has

embarked on a series of measures to ease the crunch, with huge increases in the amount of funding made available through government-affiliated financial institutions and 30 trillion yen in public funds earmarked to help banks boost their capital.

But few expect a quick end to the credit crunch or even a marked easing after April, when banks that meet the new rules on capital will have some breathing room.

"It is naive to think that the credit crunch will naturally disappear after April," Trade Minister Mitsuo Horiuchi said last week, repeating calls for the finance ministry to advise banks not to unduly restrict credit.

Critics add that while the 30 trillion yen will help to bail out banks and stabilise the financial sector, it will do little to ease credit since banks are not about to abandon the more rigorous lending standards just introduced.

Indeed, some economists see the weeding out of inefficient firms as desirable.

From such a perspective, government measures to ease credit were more of a hindrance than a help, said Mamoru Yamaguchi, economist at Nikko Research Centre.

"These firms are going to go bankrupt anyway. The measures are just putting off problems for another day, maintaining inefficiencies and going against the spirit of deregulation," he said, arguing the economy would not recover with any

## South Korean markets staggering with huge corporate debt

SEOUL (AFP) — South Korea is staggering under huge corporate debts which will keep the stock market range-bound and dampen speedy recovery hopes despite the successful rollover of short-term bank debt last week by international creditors.

"We are now facing the bigger, internal problems of looming corporate failures. The currency crisis has masked the liquidity problems of local companies," Boram Securities' Chun Young-Dong said.

A corporate liquidity

squeeze may hit the markets from April when the extension of maturities on commercial paper expires, along with some 60 per cent of \$48.4 billion in short-term corporate debt coming due this year, the analyst told AFP-Asia, an AFP financial affiliate.

Government officials here welcomed the agreement last week to New York to restructure \$21.3 billion in short-term debt owed by South Korean banks into government-backed liabilities with longer maturities.

"It will help stabilise the

naïve's short-term liquidity," said Vice Finance Minister Chung Duck-Koo.

But currency dealers called it "no more than a postponement in repayment," saying the debt exchange agreement had already been priced into the market and provided no fresh support for the South Korean won.

The won was firmer Friday trading at the 1,520-1,550 range.

"The rebound in the won reflects just the balance in supply and demand — not the rollover. The won will

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# The Business of Information

## Major Currencies & Cross Rates

Prices as at 18/03/98 20:04

Currency	Unit	Price	Price	Price	Price	Price	Price	Price
US Dollar	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
DE Mark	0.6474	0.5982	0.8155	71.20	0.7764	984.57	1.1272	3.3832
GB Sterling	1.6716	0.2373	2.4900	217.43	2.3712	3006.82	3.4417	10.2398
CH Franc	0.6712	1.2254	0.4011	67.30	0.3515	1205.87	198.15	4.1907
JP Yen	0.0077	1.4034	0.4894	1.1444	1.0096	13.82	158.18	4.7046
CA Dollar	0.7080	1.2903	0.4301	1.0486	1.09	1268.65	1.4543	4.3291
IT Lira	0.0008	1.0144	0.3321	0.0827	1385.04	0.7877	11.44	3.4012
NL Guilder	0.4886	0.8808	0.2903	72.36	63.14	0.6807	873.63	2.9735
FR Franc	0.1632	0.2880	0.0979	24.3064	21.21	0.2314	33.58	33.5900

## Middle Eastern Currencies

Currency	Unit	Price	Price	Price	Price	Price	Price	Price
US Dollar	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	0.2806	0.6317	5.1981	0.4908	5.1891	2155.15	4.7982
Saudi Riyal	0.2668	0.1890	0.1005	0.97	0.0914	0.98	407.38	0.9088
Bahrain Dinar	2.86	0.2806	0.2496	8.88	0.9102	5.74	4383.05	9.9189
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1947	0.1005	0.0838	1.0711	41.83	9.3330	
Kuwait Dinar	3.2738	2.2312	1.2302	11.32	12.02	9502.49	0.9340	
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1930	0.1025	0.0813	0.0832	416.04	0.8258	
Lebanese/1000	0.85	0.4848	2.4648	2.3827	0.1989	2.4038	2.2256	
Egyptian	0.2841	0.2086	1.1031	0.1108	1.0707	0.0898	1.0800	449.35

## Energy

Oil	Unit	Price	Price
Brent	11.91	11.08	
WTI	11.96	11.03	
Bonny	11.91	11.08	
Dubai	10.51	10.42	
UL Gas	128.00	126.00	

## Mid-East Currencies

Currency	Unit	Price	Price	Price	Price	Price	Price
SA Riyal	0.2668	0.4871	0.1890	0.3744	34.7054		
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.4871	0.1890	0.40591	35.4458		
KW Dinar	3.2738	2.2312	1.2302	4.9843	426.257		
BI Dinar	0.3770	0.4871	0.1890	3.9543	345.304		
CY Pound	1.8708	3.4178	1.119	2.7877	243.488		

## Metal Prices

Metal	Price	Price	Price
Gold (oz's)	289.9	290.4	
Silver (oz's)	5.84	5.97	
Platinum (oz's)	4.05	4.08	
AL (3 Months)	N/A	N/A	N/A
CU (3 Months)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Zinc (3 Months)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lead (3 Months)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ni (3 Months)	N/A	N/A	N/A

## Currency Deposit Rates (Bids)

Currency	Rate	Rate	Rate	Rate	Rate
USD	5.56	5.56	5.59	5.59	5.65
GBP	7.26	7.40	7.31	7.60	7.31
JPY	0.51	0.52	0.47	0.48	0.52
DEM	3.25	3.46	3.34	3.38	3.50
FRF	3.80	3.65	3.62	3.59	3.68
CHF	1.23	1.09	1.33	1.15	1.23
ITL	5.62	5.50	5.06	4.73	4.62

## Main Equity Indices

Index	Value	Change	Value	Change	Value	Change
New York	DOW JONES	8751.31	-18.68	-0.21	8758.71	8720.35
New York	S&P 500	1080.88	0.24	0.02	1082.43	1077.77
London	FT-SE 100	5903.6	68.7	1.1	5903.6	5893.3
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	16613.88	-277.52	-2.22	17022.5	16500.1
Paris	CAC 40	3652.82	-8.11	-0.25	3690.79	3681.63
Frankfurt	DAX	4918.72	-26.08	-0.55	4948.25	4915.17

## Energy

Commodity	Unit	Price	Price
Coffee (c/bs)	155.92	Spot	
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1888	Spot	
Sugar (\$/ton)	270.3	Spot	
Wheat (\$/ton)	95.7	Spot	
Soya (c/bs)	27.2	Spot	
Ten (kg/bs)	165	Spot	
Barley (\$/bsh)	0	Spot	
Rice (\$/ton)	400	Spot	

## JOD Cross Rates

Currency	Rate	Rate	Rate
US Dollar	0.708	0.710	
GB Sterling	1.1803	1.1882	
DE Mark	0.3894	0.3913	
CH Franc	0.4782	0.4806	
FR Franc	0.1181	0.1167	
JP Yen	0.6488	0.6485	
NL Guilder	0.3454	0.3471	
IT Lira	0.385	0.387	

## JORDAN MARKETPLACE \*\*\* JORDAN MARKETPLACE \*\*\* JORDAN MARKETPLACE

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## European Cup Winners' Cup Chelsea face Real Betis; Vicenza relaxed

PARIS (AFP) — Chelsea will continue their mix-and-match selection policy when they defend a 2-1 European Cup Winners' Cup quarter-final first-leg lead against the Spaniards of Real Betis at Stamford Bridge on Thursday evening.

New player-coach Gianluca Vialli has rung the changes for each game since taking over from Ruud Gullit. The Blues thrashed Crystal Palace 6-2 in midweek but Vialli then made six changes and Chelsea slumped to a 2-1 loss to West Ham at the weekend.

Further switches are likely on Thursday with both Vialli, who was not among the substitutes on Saturday, and his fellow Italian international Gianfranco Zola, both likely to be recalled.

"I'm a new manager and I'm still trying to understand the best way for the team to play," said Vialli, who — with six goals — is the joint leading scorer in the competition.

Chelsea have lost four of their five Premiership matches under Vialli and are aware they cannot afford to relax against the dangerous visitors from Seville, who have drawn with Atletico Madrid and beaten

Salamanca in their last two outings. "We know Thursday night's game is by no means over with," said coach Graham Rix.

Chelsea expect to be without England leftback Graeme Le Saux, who has been sidelined with an ankle injury, but combative skipper Dennis Wise returns after a two-match suspension.

The Londoners know they would go through to the semifinals on the away goals rule even if they lose the return match 1-0.

"A draw would be a wonderful result for us on Thursday but we just can't stop playing our football to achieve it," said Vialli. "We've got to play our game and yet still be aware and very concentrated defensively."

Betis will be without two suspended players: defender Roberto Solozabal and midfielder Fernando Sanchez and Vialli is convinced Betis will replace them with attackers.

"We know they will have to come here and try to do exactly what they did in the second half over there — throwing everybody forward," said Vialli.

Bookmakers make Chelsea the 7-4 favourites to win the trophy after their away win. German club VfB Stuttgart and Italy's Vicenza are second favourites at 5-2.

Vicenza crushed Roda Kerkrade 4-1 in the first leg in Holland, making the second leg in Italy a near formality.

Roda coach Martin Jol was sacked after Roda's directors "lost confidence" in his abilities following the humiliating defeat. He was replaced by the German coach Peter Neururer.

Vicenza, led by Pasquale Luiso, who like Vialli has scored six goals in the competition so far, are unlikely to be too inconvenienced by the absence of suspended duo Davide Belotti (defence) and Domenico Di Carlo (midfield) against Roda.

Stuttgart and Lokomotiv Moscow both forced first leg draws away from home: Stuttgart finishing 1-1 at Slavia Prague and Lokomotiv Moscow soaking up non-stop pressure away to AEK Athens and holding on for a 0-0 draw.

Lokomotiv will be looking to emulate compatriots Spartak, who stunned Ajax Amsterdam to

advance to the semifinals of the UEFA Cup earlier in the week.

Stuttgart, bizarrely, are having trouble finding enough fans to take an interest in their European campaign.

Only 13,500 tickets for Thursday's return leg game against Prague had been sold by Tuesday.

On the positive side, Stuttgart's injury problems of the last fortnight have come good at the right time with Bulgarian playmaker Krassimir Balakov, Zvonimir Soldo, Romanian striker Florin Raducioiu, Martin Spanning and Mathias Hagner all back in training and available for selection.

Striker Fredi Bobic got through his comeback match at the weekend after a hamstring pull and will head the Germans' attack.

His attacking partner Jonathon Akporbie, though, is still out with a knee injury.

"We have to lift ourselves against Prague a few notches higher than we have done in recent weeks," said coach Joachim Loew. "We are by no means through yet."

## Iran sports chief grilled over U.S. contacts, women's football

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran's moderate sports chief has been summoned to parliament for questioning about an upcoming visit to the United States by Iranian wrestlers and talk of allowing women to play football, a newspaper reported Wednesday.

Mostafa Hashemi-Taba, head of the physical education organisation, was called to a secret session of the assembly on Tuesday by three hardline conservative MPs — Mohammad-Reza Falker, Ali Movahedi Savaji and Ahmad Nejabat.

Hashemi-Taba, answering questions from Nejabat, said the issue of women's football "is out of our hands and it needs a decree from senior religious jurists" to lift the ban.

He also said that it had to be ascertained if the proper facilities existed in Iran for the sport for women.

Since the 1979 Islamic revolution, Iranian women have been facing restrictions in the sports field. But in recent years, moderate officials have taken measures to make it possible for women to play certain sports in all-female arenas.

Faezeh Hashemi, daughter of former president Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, is a strong advocate of women's sports, and she recently said women may be allowed to play football.

Hardliners are particularly opposed because football has to be played on large outdoor fields, making it difficult to keep men from watching uncovered female athletes.

The other two MPs, Falker and Savaji, questioned Hashemi-Taba "mainly on sports contacts with America," according to Jomhuri Islami newspaper. They "criticised him and asked for explanation," it said.

Iran said last week it would take part in the World Cup free-style wrestling competition in Stillwater, Oklahoma, on April 3-5.

A team of American wrestlers visited Iran a month ago for the first time since the 1979 Islamic revolution to take part in a friendly competition.

Their presence led to the American flag being raised in respect for the first time in an official ceremony here since the revolution.

The Americans said they were surprised by the attention and hospitality they received.

Tehran and Washington broke diplomatic ties in 1980, after Iranian revolutionaries seized the U.S. embassy and held its staff hostage.

Iran has taken part in two wrestling competitions in the United States in recent years.

## Inter, Atletico squeeze home, join Lazio and Spartak in UEFA Cup semis



Aston Villa soccer star Ugo Ehiogu (C) heads clear from his own goalkeeper Mark Bosnich (R), watched by Atletico Madrid player Christian Vieri (Reuters photo)

PARIS (AFP) — Nigerian international Taribo West scored in the first minute of extra-time to lift Italian giants Inter Milan past the gassy Germans of Schalke on Tuesday night and into the semifinals of the UEFA Cup.

West's close-range headed goal gave Inter a 2-1 aggregate victory after a dramatic quarter-final, second-leg contest and saw them join compatriots Lazio in the final four.

Inter appeared to be cruising by virtue of their 1-0

first leg win until Belgian striker Michael Goossens unleashed a last-minute goal for Schalke in Gelsenkirchen.

Goossens' swinging right-foot shot from the edge of the area lifted Schalke to a 1-0 lead on the night, forced the contest to 1-1 on aggregate and sent the game into extra-time. Then came West's decider.

The win saw Inter avenge their loss to Schalke in last year's final of the same competition.

Lazio advanced 3-2 on

aggregate after a 2-2 draw away to French club Auxerre and Atletico Madrid of Spain and Spartak Moscow of Russia joined the Italian sides in the semis.

Atletico, without a European trophy since 1962, lost 2-1 away to former European champions Aston Villa in Birmingham, but an early away goal from Jose Camarero proved crucial for the Spaniards.

Villa hit back with goals from Ian Taylor and Stan Collymore late in the game

but went out on the away goals rule after the sides finished 2-2 on aggregate.

Collymore's stunning goal, a blistering shot from the edge of the area, gave Villa hopes of reaching their first European semi-final since they won the European Cup in 1962 but Atletico defended smartly over the final quarter hour.

Manager John Gregory made a public apology to his predecessor, Brian Little, after Villa bowed out. "Sorry, Brian. We let you down, mate. We're thinking of you," he said.

"We won the game on the night and that was no mean feat," he added. "We didn't get into our stride in the first half. They went 1-0 up

Guerino Gottardi, with a 13th-minute shot, scored as Lazio completed a 3-2 aggregate win after their 1-0 home triumph in the first leg two weeks ago.

The Rome club increased their unbeaten record to 21 matches dating back to November, but had to survive some uncomfortable moments late in the contest. "This just carries on our superb season," said Lazio's Swedish coach Sven-Goran Eriksson. "It is incredible. We could win everything now."

Lazio's aggregate win saw them end a run of losses two years running to French clubs in European competition, while Auxerre maintained their unwanted record of never having

as Spartak Moscow downed Ajax Amsterdam 1-0 at home to seal their place in the final four.

Shirko's sixth goal of the competition gave Spartak victory in both legs of the quarter-final match. The Russian side won the first leg 3-1 in Amsterdam two weeks earlier and advanced 4-1 on aggregate.

Shirko, who also scored two goals in the first leg of the quarter-final, rounded off a counter-attack with a precise finish to delight a 32,000 crowd on a freezing Moscow night.

Dutch keeper Edwin van der Sar stopped Shirko's first shot, but the striker made no mistake when the ball rebounded to him. Ajax, winners of six



Croatian Alen Boksic (C) of Lazio of Rome shoots, watched by Franck Rabarivoni of Auxerre during their second leg UEFA Cup quarter-final (Reuters photo)

and we had a mountain to climb. We did not mind doing that and we went so close."

In-form Lazio, seeking their first European trophy, scored twice in the first 15 minutes and then held on for their draw with Auxerre in France's Chablis wine country.

Roberto Mancini, with a seventh-minute penalty, and

advanced against Italian opposition — despite two goals from ace goal poacher Stephane Guivarc'h.

"It was a pity we lost our confidence and conceded those two early goals," said Guivarc'h. "We dominated the rest of the match and it was clearly a game we could have won."

Alexander Shirko scored with five minutes remaining

European trophies in their history, attacked for long periods of the game but were unable to find a way past the well-drilled Spartak defence. Even the late addition of substitutes Benni McCarthy and Jari Litmanen failed to pay dividends with Finnish international Litmanen squandering three glorious scoring opportunities.

## SCOREBOARD

### UEFA Cup

Quarter-final, second-leg matches  
Spartak Moscow 1-0 Ajax Amsterdam  
Spartak Moscow win 4-1 on aggregate  
Auxerre 2-0 Lazio  
Lazio win 3-2 on aggregate  
Aston Villa 2-2 Atletico Madrid  
Aggregate 2-2. Atletico Madrid won on away goals  
Schalke 0-4 Inter Milan  
Inter Milan won 2-1 on aggregate

### FA Cup

Quarter-final  
Sheffield United 1-1 Coventry City  
Sheff Utd win 3-1 on penalties  
West Ham United 1-1 Arsenal  
Arsenal win 4-3 on penalties

### Friendly match

Swingcamp 1-0 Iran

### NBA

Atlanta	117	Toronto	105
Denver	90	Washington	89
New York	100	Philadelphia	96
Orlando	99	Vancouver	92
Chicago	90	Indiana	84
Dallas	99	Boston	93
Houston	96	Milwaukee	91
Phoenix	107	Sacramento	80
Cleveland	96	Portland	82
LA Clippers	107	Golden State	102

### NHL

Chicago	5	Buffalo	3
Detroit	4	Edmonton	3
Vancouver	4	Florida	3
Dallas	4	Los Angeles	3

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### WHO NEEDS ACES IT?

North-South vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH	EAST
♠ J 6 5	♠ K Q 9 8 7
♥ K 8	♥ A K Q 9 8 4
♦ Q 10 3	♦ 4 3 2
♣ Q 8 7 4	♣ 6 5
♠ A 5	♠ J 10 4

The bidding:  
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST  
INT Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: Ten of ♠

Last week we showed a hand where West had to jettison an ace to secure promoting a trump for the setting trick. Here's another reason where it is necessary.

The auction is a case of simple arithmetic. With a combined count of 27, it would seem that declarer

should have an easy road to nine tricks. And so it would have been had West not found the devilish lead of the ten of spades.

Declarer ducked the spade to both dummy and the closed hand as East signalled with the nine, and held up again when West continued with the two of spades to the right. That was a debatable action — while it was right in some instances, the fall of the spade cards strongly suggests that declarer was 5-2 and the contract would succeed if West held the ace of clubs, or fall if East held that card.

The second holding proved fatal as the cards lay. East continued with a third spade, forcing out the ace, and West found the brilliant play of jettisoning the ace of clubs.

Declarer tried bravely to come to nine tricks. The king and queen of clubs were cashed, West discarding a diamond, and since it was clear that another club would be fatal, declarer cleared the diamond suit, cashed the king of hearts and then tried to endplay West by running the nine of hearts. But West refused to win the trick, and declarer was stuck in dummy with nothing but clubs to play. East took the rest of the tricks for down one!



Brazilian Ronaldo (R) of Italy's Inter Milan passes Yves Eigenrauch of Germany's title-holder Schalke 04 during the second leg UEFA quarter-final match in Gelsenkirchen. Inter Milan won 1-0 in the first leg (Reuters photo)

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## Wing plan Knicks for

54PPH — New York's center Paul Pierce, who has been named to the NBA All-Star game, is expected to be traded to the New York Knicks. The Knicks are looking for a center to replace the injured Patrick Ewing. Pierce is a 6'10" forward/center who can play both ends of the court. He was drafted by the Boston Celtics in 1997. The Knicks are currently in a rebuilding phase and are looking for young talent. Pierce is considered a high-upside prospect. The trade would be a significant move for the Knicks, as they would be acquiring a player with the potential to become a franchise cornerstone. The Celtics, on the other hand, would be looking to fill the void left by Ewing. Pierce's versatility and athleticism make him an attractive option for both teams. The trade is expected to be completed in the near future.

## orts link Drexler

APPH — Houston Rockets forward Clyde Drexler is expected to be traded to the New York Knicks. The Knicks are looking for a forward to replace the injured Patrick Ewing. Drexler is a 6'6" forward who can play both ends of the court. He was drafted by the Portland Trail Blazers in 1988. The Knicks are currently in a rebuilding phase and are looking for young talent. Drexler is considered a high-upside prospect. The trade would be a significant move for the Knicks, as they would be acquiring a player with the potential to become a franchise cornerstone. The Rockets, on the other hand, would be looking to fill the void left by Ewing. Drexler's versatility and athleticism make him an attractive option for both teams. The trade is expected to be completed in the near future.

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